

A woman with a red turban and black sari is shown in a close-up, holding a sword. The sword has a silver hilt and a dark blade. The woman has a serious expression. The background is dark and indistinct.

PhaRO Scan

#OCD on Newnet

<http://ocd.conforums.com>



IS THIS THE *END* OF THE...

380
75¢
CAN. 95¢
U.K. 30p
FEB. 85
APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

BAT MAN




**WHERE
LEGENDS
LIVE!**

HOBERG &
GORDANO

GOTHAM BY NIGHT: FROM ONE
END TO THE OTHER, THERE ARE
PEOPLE DOING THINGS...

THERE ARE
ACTIONS AND
EVENTS, GATHER-
ING FORCE.

THE HOSPITAL:

YOU'RE VERY LUCKY,
SGT. BULLOCK-- THE
BULLET CAME WITHIN
AN INCH OF YOUR
HEART.

THE MAYOR'S
MANSION:

I HAD THE PERFECT CHANCE TO KILL HIM,
BLEVINS! I SHOT HIM POINT-BLANK IN COLD
BLOOD -- AND HE'S STILL ALIVE!

I WANT BULLOCK
DEAD, DAMMIT--
DEAD!!

YES, SIR.

THE CITY PRISON:

MAYOR HILL
SAID TO TELL
YOU YOUR CONTRACT
HAS NOT BEEN
FULFILLED, FANG,
AND HE IS EXTREMELY
DISPLEASED.

TELL HIM THE
TERMS OF OUR
CONTRACT MUST
BE REVERSED.

YOU TELL HIM THAT
THREE HITMEN HAVE
ALREADY FAILED AND
DR. FANG IS VERY
TIRED OF WATCHING
THE RUST BUILD
IN THIS VILE
CELL.

MY RELEASE
FIRST, AND
THEN BULLOCK'S
EXECUTION--

-- SINCE IT
SEEMS I'M
THE ONLY
MAN IN
GOTHAM
WHO CAN
DO THE
JOB.



AND IN A DEAD-END:

BAT MAN

...TOWERS OVER
A HOLE BORED
INTO FILTH.

SINCE THE TRAIL OF
NIGHT-SLAYER'S BLOOD
ENDS RIGHT HERE, THIS
MANHOLE IS THE ONLY
WAY TO EXPLAIN HIS
"DISAPPEARANCE INTO
THIN AIR."

AND SO... IT'S
TIME FOR MY
DESCENT.

END OF THE BAT

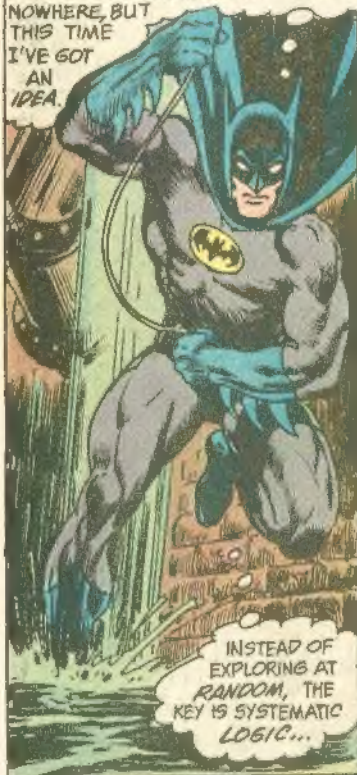
DOUG MOENCH
WRITER

RICK HOBERG & ALFREDO ALCALA
ARTISTS

BEN ODA LETTERER
ADRIENNE ROY COLORIST

LEN WEIN
EDITOR

THE FIRST TIME I CAME DOWN HERE TO EXPLORE, I FOUND NOTHING BUT A MAZE OF SEWER TUNNELS LEADING NOWHERE, BUT THIS TIME I'VE GOT AN IDEA.



INSTEAD OF EXPLORING AT RANDOM, THE KEY IS SYSTEMATIC LOGIC...

IF ANTON KNIGHT WAS AS SERIOUSLY WOUNDED AS THE AMOUNT OF LOST BLOOD INDICATED, HE WAS LUCKY TO WALK AS FAR AS HE DID UNDER HIS OWN POWER.



YET HIS BODY ISN'T HERE, SO HE MUST'VE MOVED BEYOND THIS POINT SOMEHOW.

ERGO, HE WAS WASHED AWAY BY THE FLOW OF WATER FROM THAT HARD RAINSTORM --AND SINCE GRAVITY DICTATES THE DIRECTION OF WATER FLOW...



...ALL I HAVE TO DO IS FOLLOW EACH BRANCHING TUNNEL WITH THE STEEPEST DOWNWARD SLOPE EVERY LEG OF THE WAY...



...UNTIL I FIND HIM... OR HIS GHOST.

A SHACK ON GOTHAM RIVER:

MY WOUND IS HEALED, TINA.



I'M FINALLY STRONG ENOUGH TO GO OUT AND STOP THE MURDERER WHO SHOT ME.

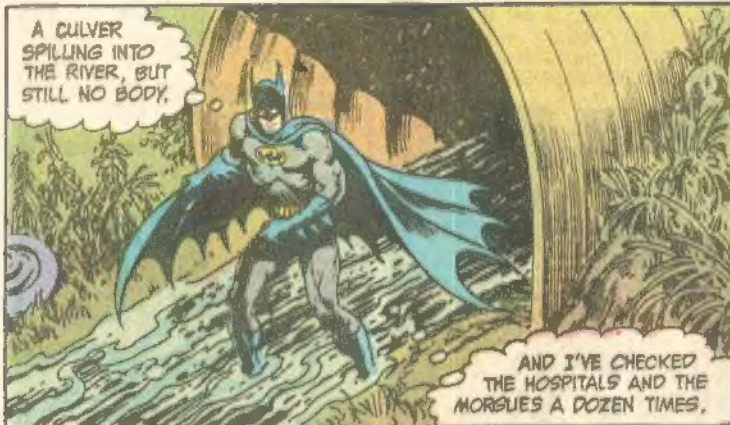
YES, I... I KNEW THIS MOMENT WOULD COME, BATMAN...

AND REMEMBER-- MY PRESENCE HERE MUST FOREVER REMAIN A SECRET.



I'LL... TELL NO ONE.

AND, CERTAIN HER FALSE "PRINCE" WILL NEVER RETURN, TINA SPILLS TEARS FROM BLIND EYES.







OUTSIDE THE CITY PRISON:

YOUR RELEASE WASN'T EASY, FANG, SO DON'T FORGET YOUR END OF THE CONTRACT. MAYOR HILL WANTS THAT FAT COP BULLOCK TAKEN CARE OF NOW -- RIGHT THERE IN THE HOSPITAL.

SURE, SURE-- TELL HILL I GOT THE MESSAGE, LITTLE MAN.



TO HELL WITH BULLOCK--BUT ONLY IN GOOD TIME. NOW THAT I'M FREE, THERE'S A PERSONAL SCORE TO SETTLE FIRST...

... WITH THE ONE WHO DENIED ME MY FREEDOM -- THE BATMAN.



A PARK NEAR THE RITZ-CARLTON:

NOW DO YOU SEE WHY I PREFER THE PARK AT NIGHT, JASON?

WITH FEWER PEOPLE, IT'S MORE SERENE AND MAGICAL ... THE SONGS OF THE NIGHTBIRDS ARE SWEETER...

I'VE ALWAYS PREFERRED ROBINS MYSELF, LADY.

VERY WELL, JASON...



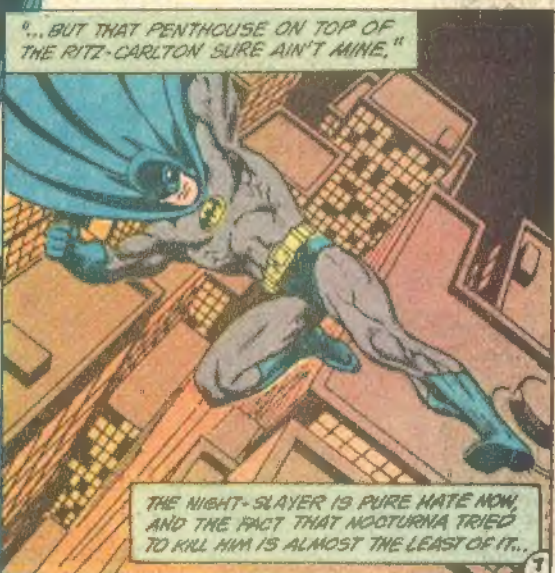
I REALIZE IT WILL TAKE TIME FOR YOU TO ACCEPT ME AS YOUR MOTHER, IF EVER YOU CAN...

... BUT I AM TRYING.



NOW PERHAPS WE SHOULD CALL IT A NIGHT AND RETURN HOME.

IT MAY BE YOUR HOME, NATALIA...



"... BUT THAT PENTHOUSE ON TOP OF THE RITZ-CARLTON SURE AIN'T MINE."

THE NIGHT-SLAYER IS PURE HATE NOW, AND THE FACT THAT NOCTURNA TRIED TO KILL HIM IS ALMOST THE LEAST OF IT...

FOR IN TRUTH, AND DESPITE THE HATE, HE STILL LOVES HER.

BUT WITHIN THE PENTHOUSE, THERE IS NO RELEASE FOR THE HATE.

THERE IS ONLY GLOOM.

BUT--

SHE PERVERTED OUR MUTUAL LOVE OF NIGHT AND ITS ELEGANCE--

A SHADOW SLIPPING THROUGH LIQUID MIDNIGHT, HE SNEERS AND STEALS FOR HER BEDROOM...

AND ONCE INSIDE, HIS EYES FALL ON--

--GAVE THAT LOVE TO OUR ENEMY THE BATMAN--
--TOOK A SON NOT OF OUR UNION OR ISSUE--

HER BEDSIDE TABLE--WHERE SHE ALWAYS KEPT IT...

SLEEPY, YOU, JASON?

NAPPED THIS AFTERNOON, NATALIA, SO I THINK I'LL STAY UP-- THE BATMAN MIGHT NEED ME.

IN HER ROOM, NATALIA, SIGHS AT THE COLDNESS OF HER ADAPTED SON...

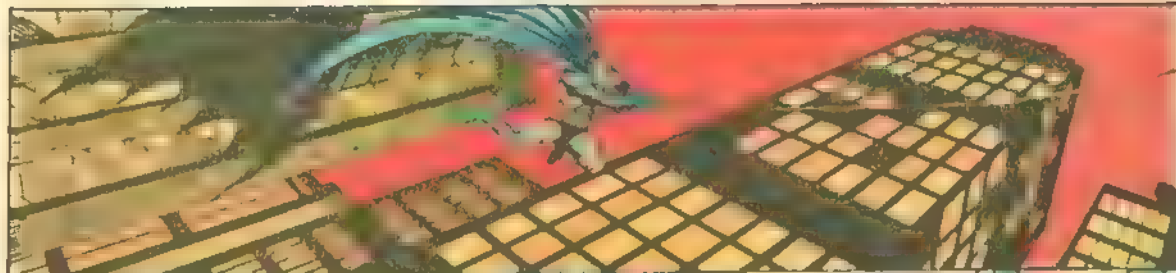
...AND SIGNS, TOO, OVER THE FACT THAT THE BATMAN MIGHT NEED JASON...

...WHILE HE HAS YET TO SHOW THAT HE NEEDS HER.

...MIGHT NEED ROBIN...

8

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.



OH, WELL... I'VE ALWAYS GOT MY BOOK TO PUT ME TO--

EH--?



MY GUN!

WH-WHERE--?



RIGHT HERE, MY DEAR MURDERESS... STILL MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN THE MOON AND STARS.



ANTON!

OR HIS GHOST...



"... COME TO AVENGE MY DEATH WITH THE VERY SAME GUN YOU USED TO SHOOT ME "

COME ON, BATMAN COME ON.. I'M JUST ITCHIN' TO CHANGE TO ROBIN AND--



WHAT WAS THAT? FROM INSIDE--!

GRUMP

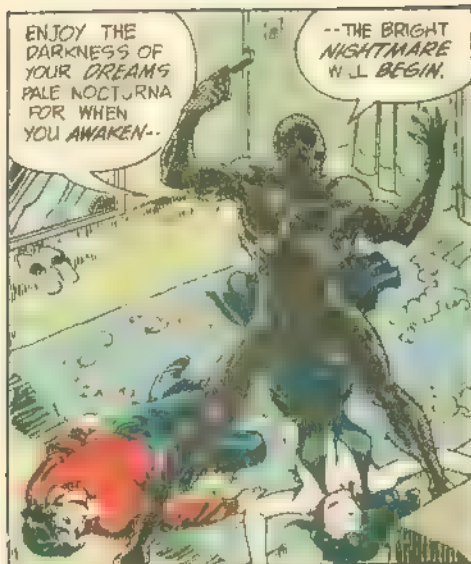


NATALIA!!



UHN--!

THAPT



ENJOY THE DARKNESS OF YOUR DREAMS PALE NOCTURNA FOR WHEN YOU AWAKEN--

--THE BRIGHT NIGHTMARE WILL BEGIN.



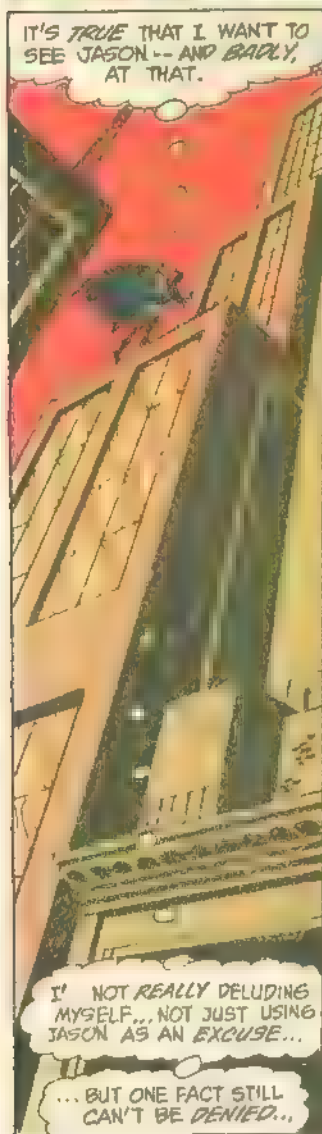
THIS GUN, USED TO KILL ME...

... WILL ALSO SHATTER THE HEART OF YOUR NEW LOVER.



AND WHEN THE BATMAN IS BUT A GHOST...

PERHAPS YOUR LAST LOVE WILL JOIN US ALL IN HELL.



IT'S TRUE THAT I WANT TO SEE JASON-- AND BADLY, AT THAT.

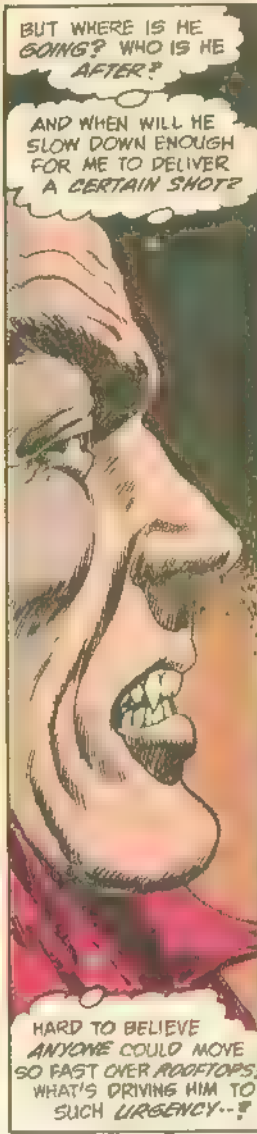
I' NOT REALLY DELUDING MYSELF... NOT JUST USING JASON AS AN EXCUSE...

... BUT ONE FACT STILL CAN'T BE DENIED...



I ALSO WANT TO SEE NOCTURNA.

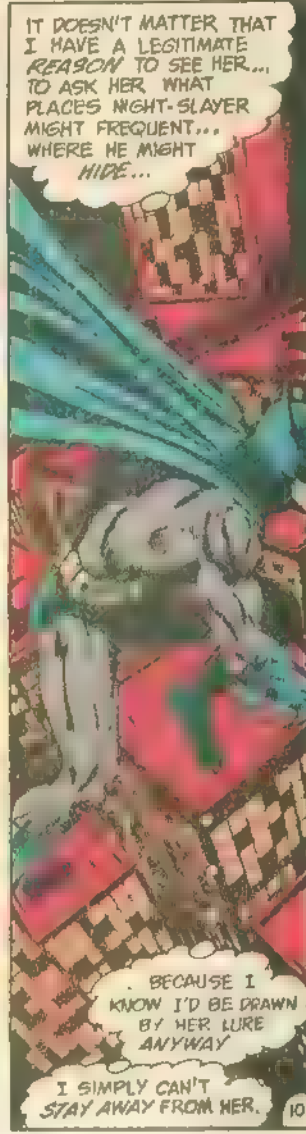
I'VE FOUND HIM...



BUT WHERE IS HE GOING? WHO IS HE AFTER?

AND WHEN WILL HE SLOW DOWN ENOUGH FOR ME TO DELIVER A CERTAIN SHOT?

HARD TO BELIEVE ANYONE COULD MOVE SO FAST OVER ROOFTOPS! WHAT'S DRIVING HIM TO SUCH URGENCY--?



IT DOESN'T MATTER THAT I HAVE A LEGITIMATE REASON TO SEE HER... TO ASK HER WHAT PLACES NIGHT-SLAYER MIGHT FREQUENT... WHERE HE MIGHT HIDE...

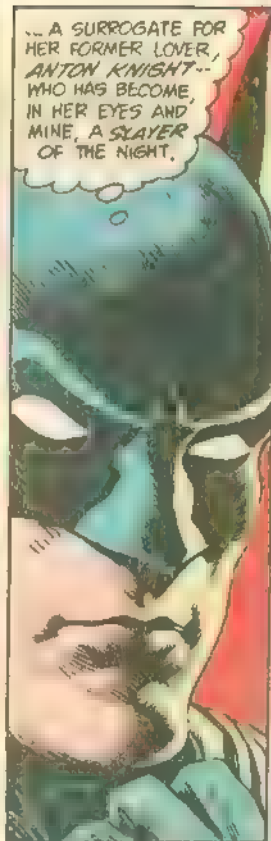
BECAUSE I KNOW I'D BE DRAWN BY HER LURE ANYWAY

I SIMPLY CAN'T STAY AWAY FROM HER.

SHE CLAIMS TO LOVE ME--
BUT IT'S ONLY BECAUSE
I'M ANOTHER CREATURE
OF THE NIGHT...



... A SURROGATE FOR
HER FORMER LOVER,
ANTON KNIGHT--
WHO HAS BECOME,
IN HER EYES AND
MINE, A SLAYER
OF THE NIGHT.

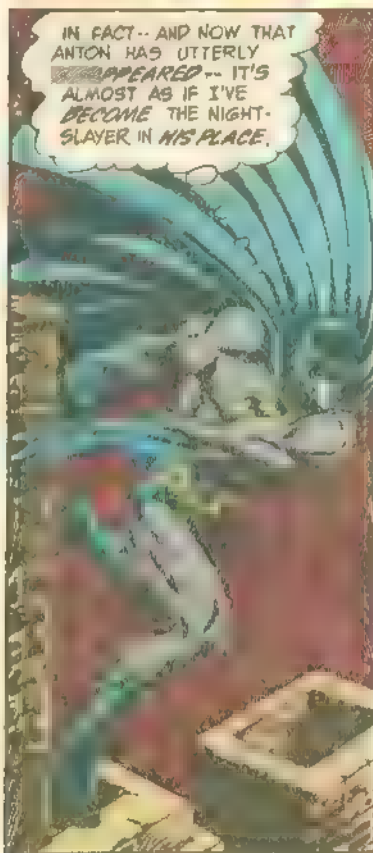


HE'S PULLED TOO FAR AWAY FOR
A DEAD SHOT, BUT AT LEAST
HE'S FINALLY SLOWING AS HE
NEARS THAT TALL BUILDING AHEAD

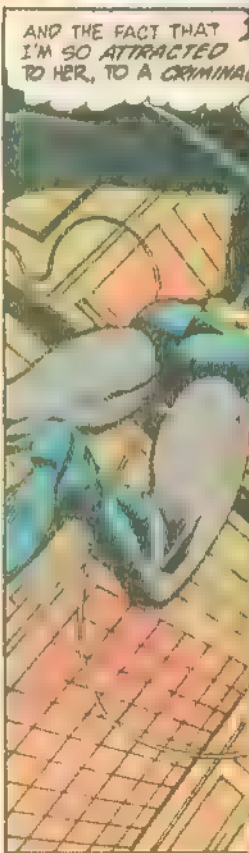
LOOKS LIKE THE
RITE-CARLTON
HOTEL.



IN FACT-- AND NOW THAT
ANTON HAS UTTERLY
DISAPPEARED-- IT'S
ALMOST AS IF I'VE
BECOME THE NIGHT-
SLAYER IN HIS PLACE.



AND THE FACT THAT
I'M SO ATTRACTED
TO HER, TO A CRIMINAL--

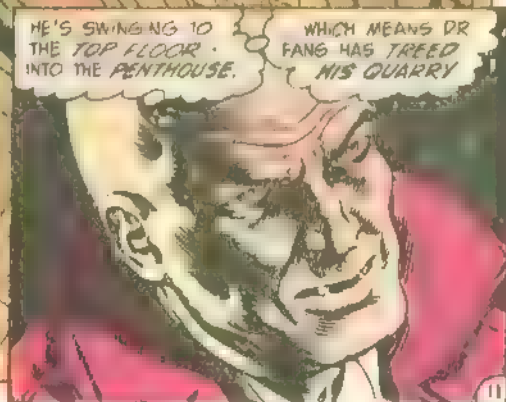


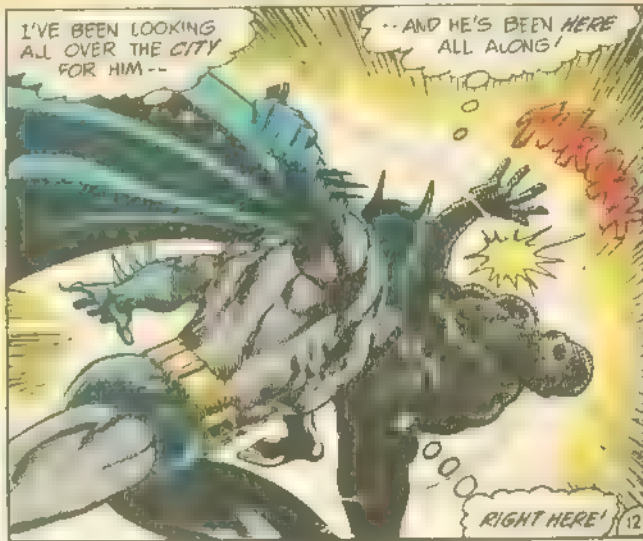
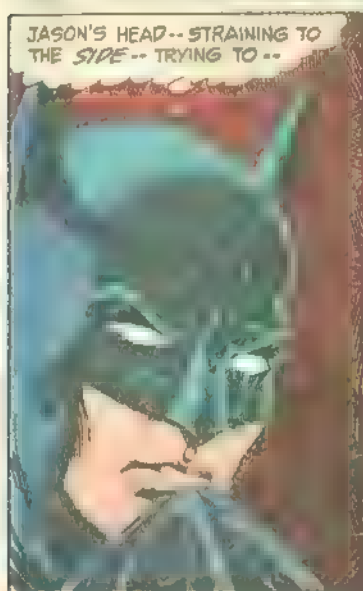
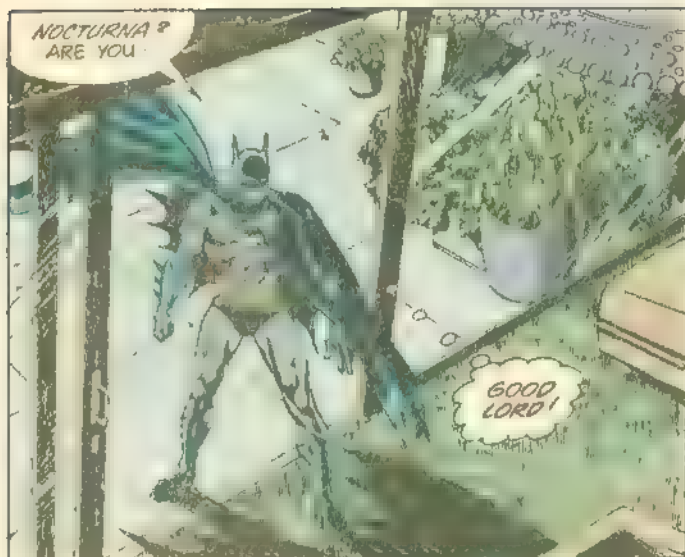
--NEEDING TO SEE
HER DESPERATELY--

--MAKES ME
FEEL ALMOST
GUILTY ENOUGH
TO BE H.M.

HE'S SWINGING TO
THE TOP FLOOR--
INTO THE PENTHOUSE.

WHICH MEANS DR
FANG HAS TREED
HIS QUARRY







POOR NATALIA... THE TWO MEN SHE CLAIMS TO LOVE -- TRYING TO KILL EACH OTHER...

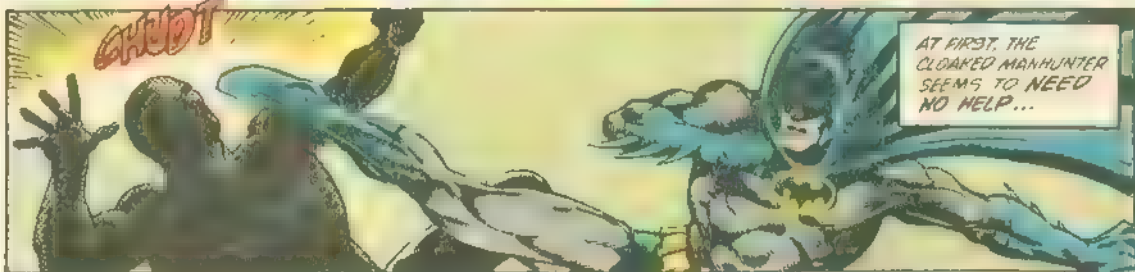
...AND SHE'S FORCED TO WATCH IT. HELPLESSLY TIED TO A FRONT-ROW SEAT.



HOPE SHE CAN HANDLE IT WITHOUT HAVING HER MIND SNAP.



... 'CAUSE IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE I'LL BE ABLE TO SNAP THIS TWINE SOON ENOUGH TO DO BATMAN ANY GOOD.



AT FIRST, THE CLOAKED MANHUNTER SEEMS TO NEED NO HELP...



GO ON, BATMAN-- HIT ME IF YOU THINK I CAN BE HURT!

BUT KNOW THIS-- GHOSTS FEEL NOTHING!

HE'S COMPLETELY INSANE..



AND EVEN IF MY HEART WERE STILL ALIVE --

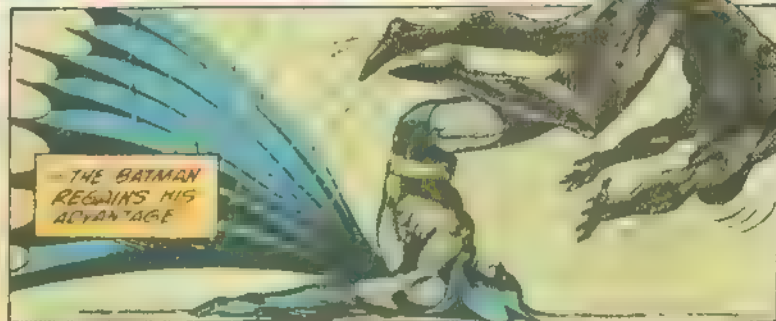


--THE HATE
IT HOLDS--

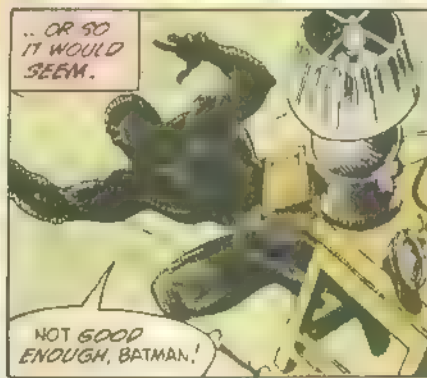
SWOKK



--IS FAR MORE THAN
ENOUGH TO SEND YOU
STRAIGHT TO HELL!



THE BATMAN
REGAINS HIS
ADVANTAGE



... OR SO
IT WOULD
SEEM.

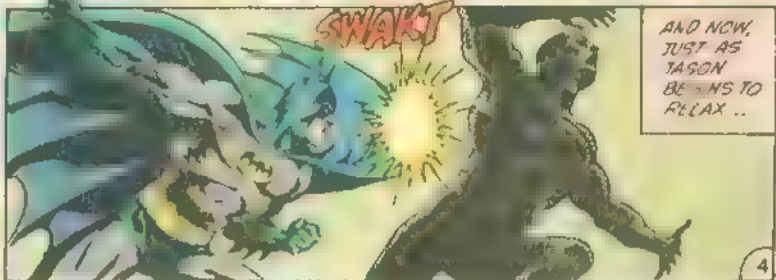
NOT GOOD
ENOUGH, BATMAN!



SHE KILLED ME-- AND YOU'VE
TAKEN MY PLACE IN HER ARMS!



FOR THAT
ALONE, I -



SWAKK

AND NOW,
JUST AS
JASON
BEGINS TO
RELAX ..

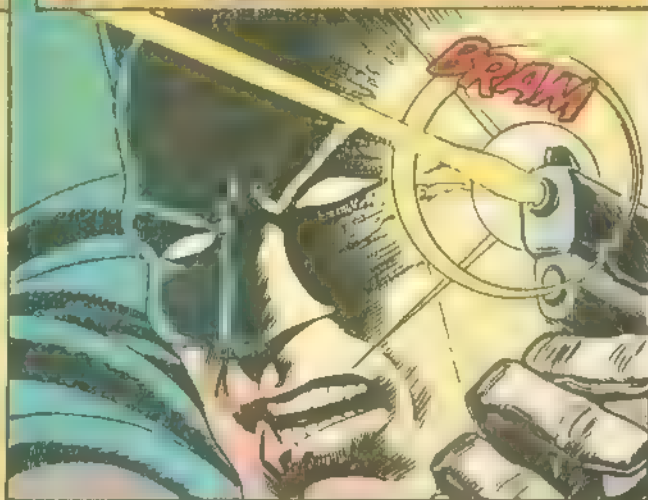


HE IS FASTER THAN THE LAWS OF PHYSICAL RESPONSE WOULD SEEM TO ALLOW--



--FAST ENOUGH TO ARREST THE GUN'S SWIFT WHIRL TOWARDS HIS HEART...

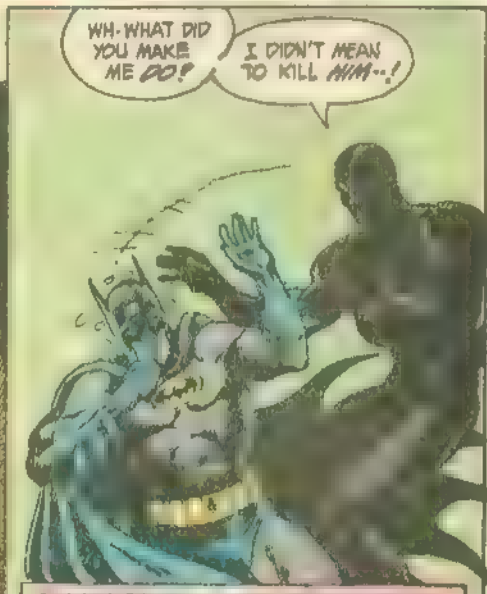
EVEN SO HIS CORN AND SCALP ARE RENT, HIS SKULL SEARED AND CREASED...



... BUT ULTIMATELY--

AGH-H!

- IT'S DR FING, HESITATING TOO LONG, WHO RIDES THE HOT REVVET STRAIGHT TO HELL.

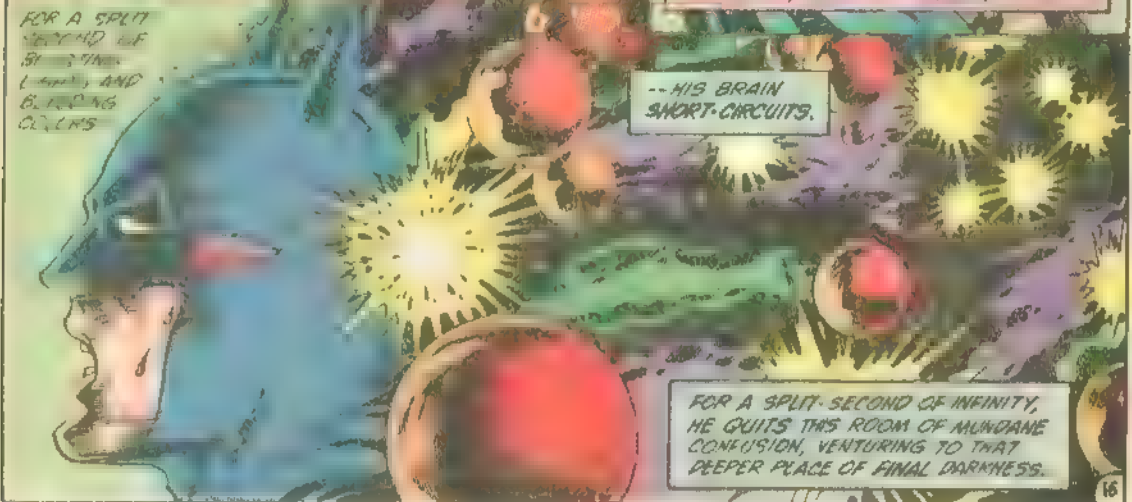


WH-WHAT DID YOU MAKE ME DO?

I DIDN'T MEAN TO KILL HIM--!

BUT THE BATMAN, ALREADY SAGGING TO HIS KNEES, DOES NOT HEAR.

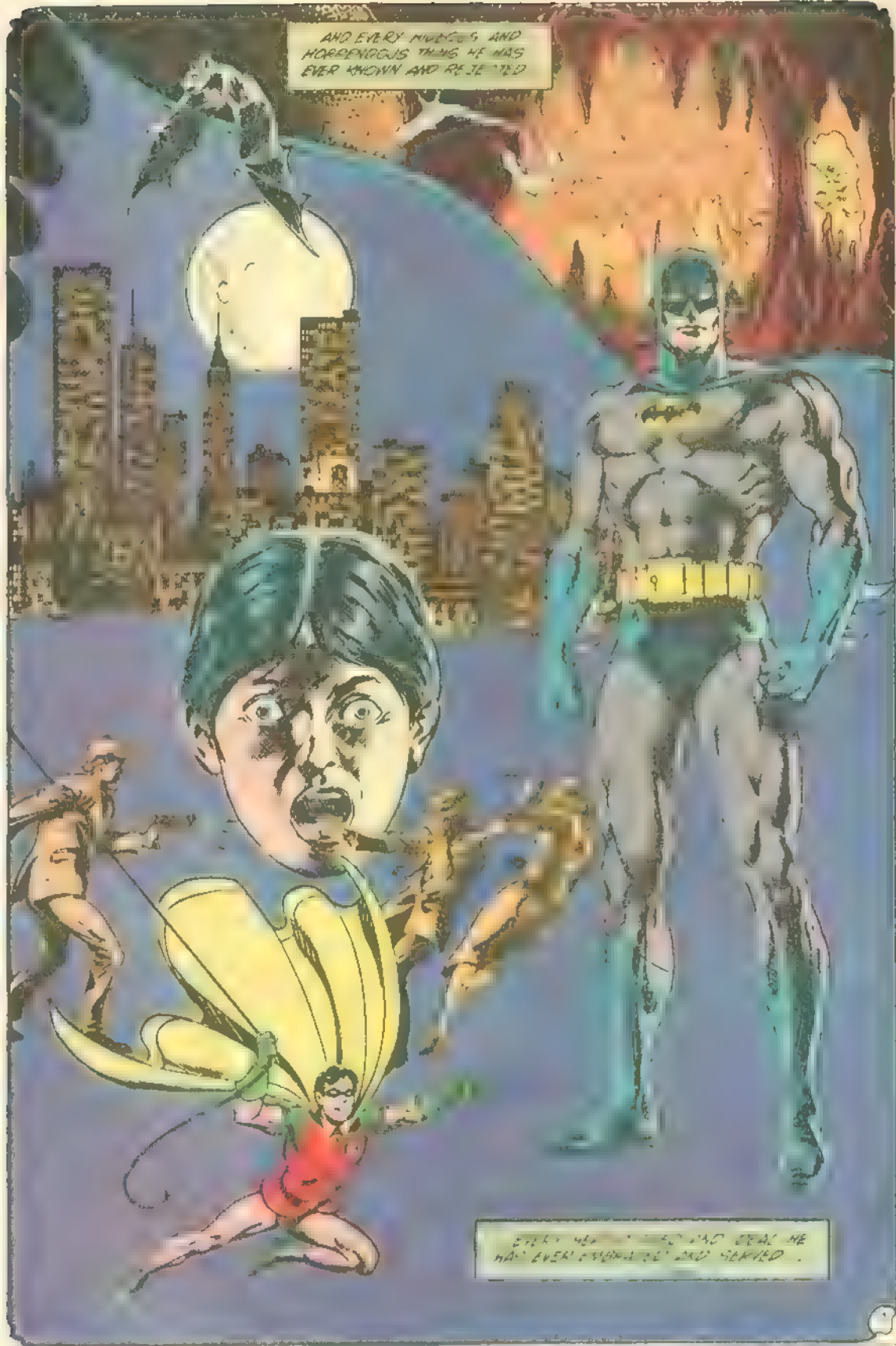
FOR A SPLIT SECOND HE SEES THE LIGHT, AND BLENDING COLORS



-- HIS BRAIN SHORT-CIRCUITS.

FOR A SPLIT-SECOND OF INFINITY, HE QUILTS THIS ROOM OF MUNDANE CONFUSION, VENTURING TO THAT DEEPER PLACE OF FINAL DARKNESS.

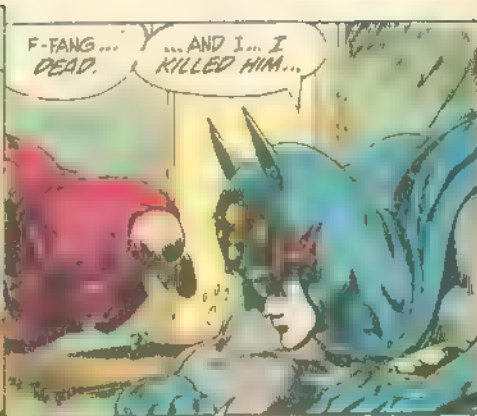
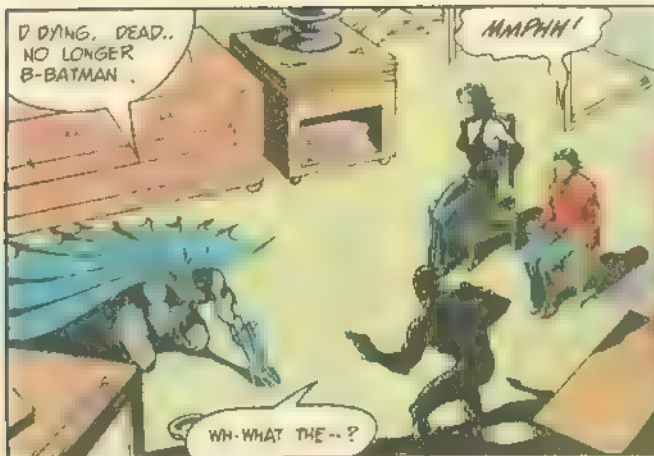
AND EVERY RIDICULOUS AND
HORRIFIC THING HE HAS
EVER KNOWN AND REJECTED



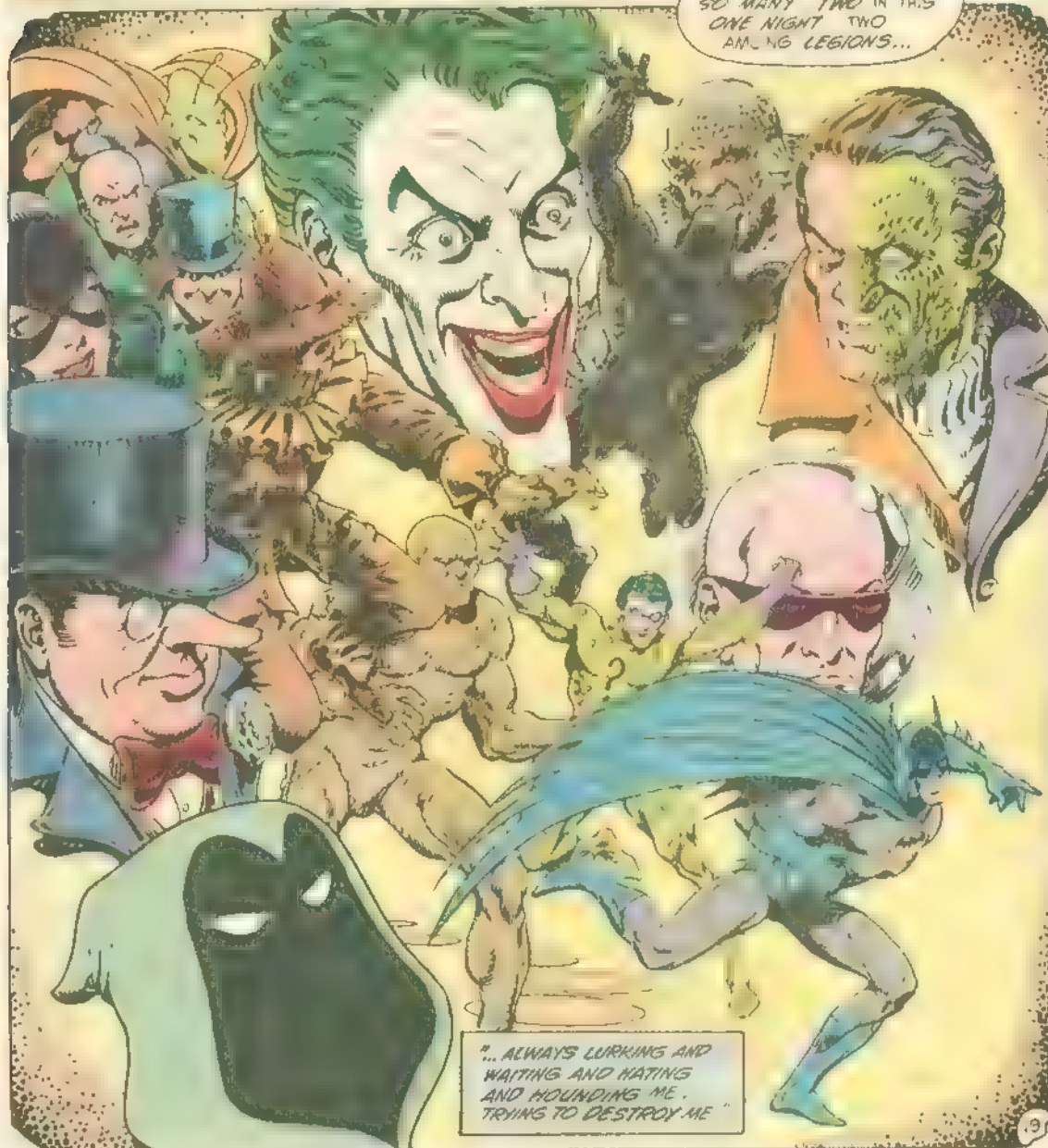
EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD HE
HAS EVER ENCOUNTERED AND SERVED.

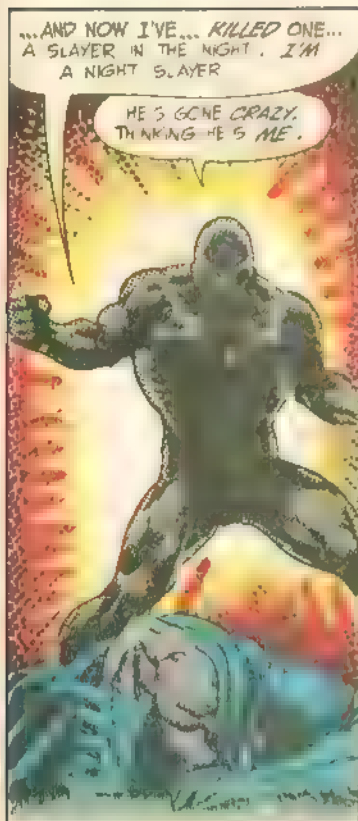
... IS SHATTERED

... AND DESTROYED



ANOTHER Foe AMONG
SO MANY TWO IN THIS
ONE NIGHT TWO
AMING LEGIONS...





...AND NOW I'VE... KILLED ONE...
A SLAYER IN THE NIGHT. I'M
A NIGHT SLAYER

HE'S GONE CRAZY.
THINKING HE'S ME.



AND IF IT REQUIRES LITTLE THOUGHT, ALL OF IT IS CRUEL:

YES! THAT'S
~~RIGHT!~~ YOU
ARE THE
NIGHT SLAYER!
YOU'VE ALWAYS
BEEN THE
NIGHT-SLAYER!



BEING "BATMAN" WAS
ONLY A MAD
DREAM...



A MERE DELUSION TO COVER YOUR
ACTUAL IDENTITY!

AND DEEP WITHIN THAT PLACE
OF FINAL DARKNESS THE BEHOLD,
SHATTERED SHARDS BEGIN TO
STIR, AS IF EACH WERE SEEKING
A SEPARATE VEIN TO SLASH
FROM THE SAME HEART.



BUT, NO-- THEY MOVE ONLY TO
JOIN TOGETHER, DEIVING THE
DARKNESS, REJECTING DEATH...



MERGING BACK INTO
NEARLY LOST LIFE...

AND YET THE IMAGE THEY
FORM, THIS TIME, IS THE
DARKNESS



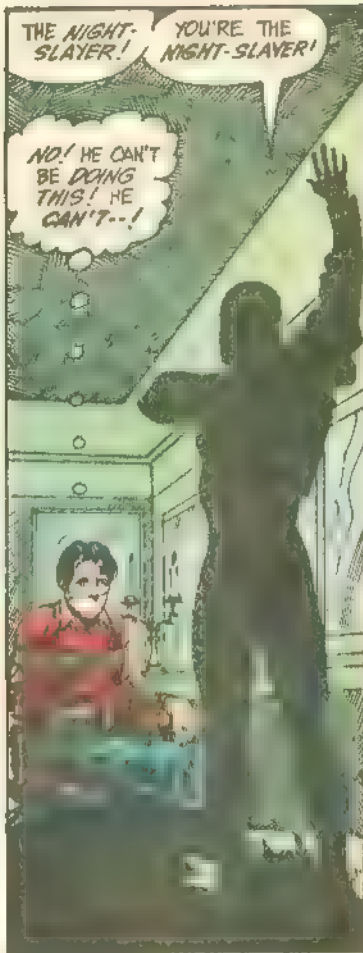
AT ITS VERY
WORST



HIS FACE IS FAMILIAR.

I'VE SEEN IT SOMEWHERE
BEFORE ... BUT I CAN'T
QUITE --

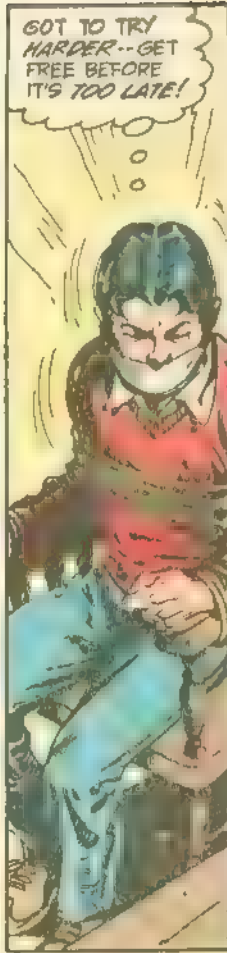
WH-WHO AM I...?



THE NIGHT-SLAYER!

YOU'RE THE NIGHT-SLAYER!

NO! HE CAN'T BE DOING THIS! HE CAN'T--!

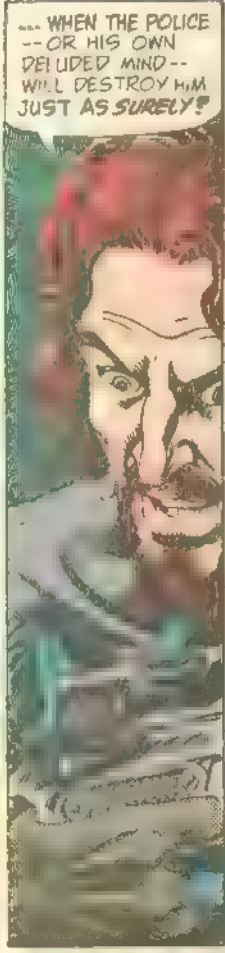


GOT TO TRY HARDER--GET FREE BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

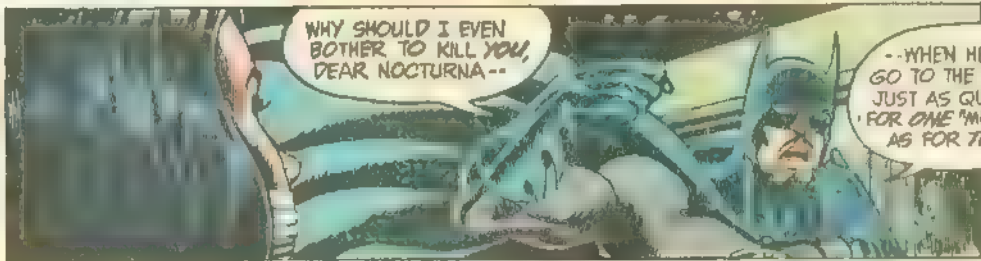


HOW DO YOU LIKE MY MAGIC TRICK, NOCTURNA? I BECOME HIM AND HE BECOMES ME.

INDEED, WHY SIMPLY KILL HIM, WHEN HE CAN BE MADE TO SUFFER INFINITELY GREATER TORMENT...?



... WHEN THE POLICE --OR HIS OWN DELUDED MIND-- WILL DESTROY HIM JUST AS SURELY?



WHY SHOULD I EVEN BOTHER TO KILL YOU, DEAR NOCTURNA--

-- WHEN HE WILL GO TO THE CHAIR JUST AS QUICKLY FOR ONE "MURDER" AS FOR TWO...?



... AND WHEN I NOW HAVE THE MEANS TO REGAIN YOUR LOVE--

--AS THE BATMAN.



MMPHH!

NNGH!

WH-WHAT...?

THIS GUN... IN MY HAND...

GUEST MEANWHILE

COMIC BOOKS THE MAINSTREAM ATTITUDE

by
John Callahan

One Saturday, I was at a comics convention in a nearby town. It was in a mall, and so people who were there saw all these kids and a few adults spread out all over the place, and speaking an indecipherable language, like, "Where did you get that TEEN TITANS Annual?" or "I swear, Richard, this X-Men Graphic Novel is a good buy!" or "I wonder who is doing the inking on the STAR TREK III Special?" I was just trying to trade some comics to someone when a middle-aged man comes up to me and says, "What's going on here today, son?" (He wasn't my father, in case you're wondering.) I tried my best to explain what a comic book convention was, and when I was done, he looked at me as though in pity and said "I can't understand you kids anymore. Why don't you kids play baseball or something?"

I didn't try to answer his question then, but I'll answer it now. We "kids" buy, read, and collect comics because we like it. I have nothing against playing baseball, in fact, it is one of my favorite sports. However, I believe that comics, on the whole, are good clean entertainment. (There are also good gory comics that are also entertaining, but we won't talk about them, after all this is a family publication.) They are certainly less repulsive than most R-rated movies, and some TV shows. Now, granted that comic books as a whole are not big candidates for future Pulitzer Prizes, but I think the critics of comics should look at and read them and see if they are different than the comics that they grew up on, when the stories and art were there to sell comics first, not for the quality of the plot or the drawings. In the real good comics, violence is there to move the plot forward, not to get a cheap thrill. (Your RONIN is a good example of this.)

I hope that adults will stop treating us comic fans like mental patients and read the comics of today. I believe they will be in for a pleasant surprise.

that July 4th's lost a bit of its luster. There are even monthly gatherings in some cities, just to sell and trade—another dream that started in Phil's imagination.

But there were larger dreams waiting. In 1973 it was almost impossible for collectors to find comics they wanted in mint condition or in sufficient quantities through newsstand distribution. Phil envisioned a way for them to buy through the handful of stores that were selling old comics, or by mail order, if the copies could only be secured from the publishers. Together with partner Jonni Levas, he made the dream real. It became the "direct sales" industry, making it possible for comic shops to spring up across the country, new distributors to come into existence, established publishers to produce comics more oriented to the fans, and new publishers to open their doors. It's hard to count all the changes that you can trace back to that one dream.

Phil was also a talented writer, both of comics and about them, a precise editor and critic, a teacher who left his students sharing his appreciation of the beauty of our language, a man who knew how to share the richness of emotion he felt from love to anger with those he cared about, a devoted father to his two daughters, and a friend to more people than most of us ever get to meet.

Phil Seuling left his dreams to share and enjoy. We'll miss him all the more because now we'll never know what his next dream would have been.

—Paul Levitz

If you've ever spent a happy afternoon at a comic convention or bought a comic you enjoyed at a comic shop, consider spending the next minute in silent prayer. On August 21, 1984, Phil Seuling passed away and without him you probably would never have had either of those pleasant moments. Writers and artists deservedly get most of the attention from comic fans, because it's their dreams that are put on paper for us all to share. But there are other dreamers, too, whose dreams you've shared without knowing it.

Phil was one of the early New York comic fans who took a hand in organizing the comic conventions of the sixties, back when a turnout that topped one hundred people was record-breaking. But he dreamed of the magic that a comic con could be, and when he took over the July 4th convention he made it into a Mecca for fans and professionals alike. For the first time legends of the industry were actually flown in for appearances after decades of anonymity, auctions were held, awards were presented, artists were given room to exhibit, even publishers were cajoled into participating and recognizing the existence of fandom. At its peak, every person who was interested in comics in this country who could afford to made the pilgrimage to New York for the "Seulingcon," which took on his name and personality as no such event in our field has ever been identified with a person.

Today that's all taken for granted as part of a good comic convention, and the good ones happen often enough

ON SALE WEEK CHECK OF NOVEMBER 8 LIST

☐ **Arak, Son of Thunder 41:** Arak begins the long trek home!

- ☐ **Batman 380:** Rick Hoberg joins as the new penciller!
- ☐ **The Flash 342:** The trial continues as the DA gains the upper hand
- ☐ **G.I. Combat 274:** The Haunted Tank! Mercenaries! OSS!
- ☐ **Superman 404:** Imagine if Superboy never became Superman!
- ☐ **Tales of the Teen Titans 51:** Chechire returns in search of Adeline Kane!
- ☐ **Omega Men 23:** Can Primus and the

- Omegans free Nimbus' lost power?
- ☐ **Star Trek 11:** The Mirror Universe Kirk gains control of the Excelsior!
- ☐ **Amethyst 2:** Amy is suddenly brought to the Gemworld as Amethyst to fight evil magic!
- ☐ **Jemm, Son of Saturn 6:** Jemm escapes from Synn!
- ☐ **The Immortal Dr. Fate 2:** Presenting the Pasko-Giffen saga!



AND IF THE COLD PIECE OF STEEL
IS AN ALIEN THING, THE BODY
CANNOT BE DENIED...

... THE NIGHT KNOWS IN MOCKING
MIRTH THAT IT IS TRUE.

IT... IT'S TRUE!
I KILLED FANG!
I'M THE NIGHT-
SLAYER!

AND IN THE SENSE
THAT HE ALTERED
THE GUN'S AIM--

I'M A CRIMINAL--
A KILLER!



AND AT LAST, ALL OF HIS
FOES-- SO MANY OF THEM,
LEGIONS OF THEM...

... REACH OUT TO
WELCOME HIM, AS
ONE OF THEIR OWN.



NOOO!!

REPT

I DID IT--!



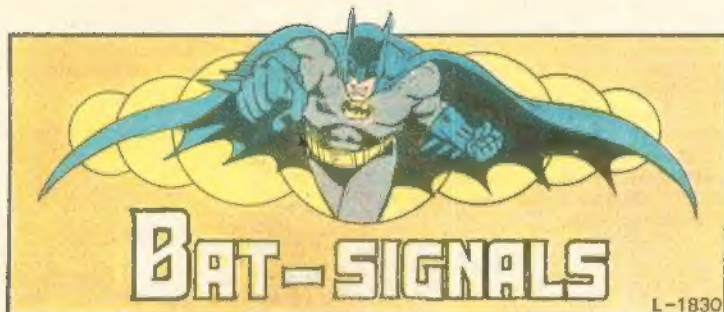
IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF
DETECTIVE
(ON SALE IN TWO WEEKS):

**THE
KILLER
NAMED
BATMAN!**

AND BE HERE FOR THE
CONCLUSION IN THE NEXT
ISSUE OF

BATMAN
(ON SALE IN THIRTY DAYS):

**DARKLY
MOVED THE
PAWNS!**



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Hi there. This is our last double-issue letters column, since we'll be all caught up. First, your thoughts on issue #375 and Mr. Freeze:

Dear Len, Don, and Doug,

BATMAN #375 held my interest because it was a one-issue story. Also, Don Newton's art showed off one of the Caped Crusader's most underrated foes, Mr. Freeze, to the best advantage he's been at in a long while.

Charles D. Brown
39 Stockton Street
Brentwood, NY 11717

Dear Len,

Doug managed to craft a convincing Penguin last issue, but I'm afraid even his great talent failed to make Mr. Freeze anything more than the third-rate, lackluster villain he has always been.

I think Doug knew he was on a loser and attempted to liven the proceedings with Sammy's verse and the general bickering of Freeze's gang. Alas, the verse only served to irritate me, distracting as it did from the flow of events. As for Sammy and company, well, yeah, they were amusing, but I found that I cared little for their fates in the end.

Don and Alfredo, happily, were up to their usual standards, which means the artwork was outstanding.

By the way, if you're keeping track of these things, I vote for Batman reciprocating Julia's interest rather than Vicki's, if it comes to a choice. If it doesn't, well, the more the merrier, right?

Dale Coe
41 Whitecross Road
Warrington, Cheshire WA5 1LR
England

Hello,

I just wanted to write to thank you all for the consistently excellent job you're doing on BATMAN and DETECTIVE COMICS. BATMAN #375 is the latest example of superb storytelling. The return of the old villains, Mr. Freeze in this case, has been done very well lately. The Batman/Julia/Bruce Wayne/Vicki situation is fascinating and the losing of Jason is a shocker (although I could see it coming). As a final note, the continuity

between BATMAN and DETECTIVE is great. Thank you, everyone, and keep up the good work.

Archie Marks
Memphis, TN

On behalf of the two creative staffs, we thank you. We've all been very happy with the way the two Bat-books are coming out. The current storyline is building to a conclusion and then Doug will be taking us in different directions. Stick around, it's going to be fun.

Dear Len and Gang,

BATMAN #375 was another great classic! Thank you for an outstanding story, Doug. I especially appreciated the rhyming narration. It was a special added touch that made this story unique. Mr. Freeze is one of my favorite villains. I was particularly pleased to see him pull an Ice Cannon out of his arsenal.

The interaction between Julia and Vicki was very refreshing. It is an interesting situation you have created here: Vicki loving Bruce and Julia interested in Batman. Also, I liked the way Vicki and Julia handled Sgt. Bullock on page 13.

The artwork was done extremely well, too! Special thanks to Todd Klein and Adrienne Roy for being so masterful at their jobs.

H.E. Ramsey
Troutdale, OR

Dear Len,

I really enjoyed BATMAN #376 and would like to express my comments. The cover was magnificent, as all the BATMAN covers are. I liked how Alfred helped Bruce solve the mystery just as he used to help a lot. Good show, everyone!

Paul Romano
RD #2 Sunset Drive
Rutland, VT

Dear Editor,

My compliments on BATMAN #376; especially pages 5-8. Alfred has always been a favorite of mine. How nice to see so many facets of this man. He is at once a philosopher and confident, a devil's

advocate and detective, as well as a more current source of information than Batman's computer could ever hope to be. Indeed, I hope Bruce will avail himself of Alfred's conversation much more often in the future. This man is one of Bruce Wayne's considerable resources that often isn't appreciated enough.

I especially liked the irony that the book seen most prominently from our point of view is Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*. It rather sums up how these two men must view Jason's absence. As many of us surely do.

Mary Liz Frann
4121 N. 96th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53222

Dear Sirs,

First of all, thank you ever so much for bringing back Nocturna. She's a unique villainess and I really like her. There's also the fact that too many Bat-villains, such as the Manikin and the Sportsman, get only one story, then vanish. It's wonderful to see that Natasha Knight hasn't joined their ranks.

I hate Nightshade. He's not a character, he's a gimmick. I won't scream with fury if he sticks around, but I might yawn with boredom. The poor man has nothing even faintly resembling a personality and his tricks are so cheap that it's pathetic to see him try to use them against The Batman. It's obvious The Batman will easily defeat him anyway. As for his real name ... Sturges Helstrom ... are you kidding? No wonder he turned to crime.

Michael Pickens
784 Blacksnake Road Apt. D-4
Utica, OH 43080

Villains come and go, get imprisoned, and either escape or get paroled. Some retire, some give their powers/weapons to others. And some just fade away. As you may have noticed over the last year or so, Doug has certainly brought back a number of villains many people have written off entirely, such as Mr. Freeze, the Mad Hatter, and even Deadshot. Some are too good to let fade away for long, such as the Joker, Penguin, and Catwoman. Just consider, after more than 45 years of publishing, Batman has more than his share of archenemies. Some just have to wait in line to get a crack at the Caped Crusader.

And now for another edition of "Why Hasn't Anyone Noticed the New Robin is Shorter?" We'll be wrapping this contest up in a month or so and Len will select the best answer and we'll award something interesting.

... I doubt nobody has noticed. I'm sure many people (including Commissioner Gordon) have noticed and either have decided not to comment or have made comments the readers are not yet privy to. I think Vicki can be excused for mistaking Jason for Dick in South America. After all, Bruce did it, too.

Paul Gadzikowski
Evanston, IL

... Robin has been gone from Gotham City for several years. Maybe the Gothamites are so happy to see the Dynamic Duo together again, their minds remember Robin as he was when he was always around. As far as his voice, with a big city like Gotham, there are probably thousands of people who have never heard either Robin, especially since the new Robin has not yet been interviewed on radio or television.

Mark V. Geier
Pekin, IL

... I think you'll have to take for granted that Commissioner Gordon will notice. Most of Gotham's citizens see Robin as still a boy. Most of them have probably never seen Batman and Robin in action, or if they have, it was a shadowy figure seen dimly in an alley. It's the mystique of Batman and Robin that everyone thinks they know.

Lauri Cahoon
Little Suamico, WI

... I would say that, regardless of the objective phenomena, people see what they expect to see. Not only that, but any judgment on differences between the two would have to be based on the memory of what one had seen, and memory adjusts itself to what we can't accept or can't understand by altering itself to something different but acceptable.

William Shirley
Pontotoc, MS

... All that has to be done is Batman, Nightwing, and Robin hold a news conference. Now they hold a news conference and explain the changes in identity. The matter about someone noticing Bruce Wayne's new ward and

trying to relate it to the new Robin ... well, to be candid, who notices stuff like that?

Alvin Harper
Augusta, GA

COMING ATTRACTIONS

In two weeks, Doug, Bob Smith, and guest-penciler Pat Broderick start bringing things toward conclusion in DETECTIVE #547 as things do not turn out to be what they appear to be. Will Jason be able to find Bruce/Night-Slayer, and can Anton get away with dressing like Batman?

Then, in a month, BATMAN #381, we finally reach the end, but there are lots of twists and turns before page 23. For sure, a story to keep you breathless.

Until then, keep those cards and letters coming. Let us know how you like Rick Hoberg's debut in these pages. For now, keep smiling.

—Bob Greenberger

WHO IS... AZRAEL?

PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE ANSWER!
APPEARING IN BOTH EDITIONS OF... THE TEEN TITANS